

## EVENTS OF NINETEEN

Brief Summary of the Year's Contribution to History.

## BRILLIANT EPOCHS, NATIONAL AND LOCAL

Triumphs of War and Peace—Disasters on Land and Sea—Names of Eminent Men on the Year's Death Roll.

The events of the year just closed that tower Shasta-like above the common run mark historic epochs in our local as well as national life. The war with Spain for the liberation of Cuba, lasting 114 days, nearly the curliest of national life into unlooked-for channels, enlarged the boundaries of the United States, gave us territory in distant seas and lifted the nation high among the ruling powers of the world. Just as the war and its results overshadowed all other national events, so did the Transatlantic Exposition affect minor local affairs. Although its birth was obscured by the clouds of war, it grew in public favor with the passing days, scattered the clouds in July and rode into the clear sunshine of success in August. For the last ten weeks it shone resplendent on the western landscape, a winged conqueror in silence, seen and admired by hundreds of thousands, and inaugurating the currents of trade by its lessons and example. That the beneficial influence was immediate and permanent does not admit of doubt. It demonstrated what may be accomplished by a union of energy and unquenchable will.

## Events of the War.

The chief events of the war may be summarized briefly as follows:  
February 15—Battleship Maine blown up in Havana harbor.  
March 9—Fifty million dollars appropriated by congress for the naval defense.  
March 28—Resolutions declaring war on Spain introduced in both houses of congress.  
April 20—Resolution of congress declaring war approved by the president.  
April 23—Call for 125,000 volunteers issued.  
May 1—Commodore Dewey's fleet destroys Spanish fleet in Manila bay.  
July 1 and 2—Capture of El Caney and San Juan heights, Santiago, by American troops.  
July 3—Destruction of Cervera's fleet at Santiago harbor entrance.  
July 14—City of Manila surrendered.  
July 25—General Miles' expedition lands in Porto Rico.  
August 12—Peace protocol signed in Washington.  
August 13—City of Manila surrendered to the American army and navy.  
October 1—First meeting of the peace commissioners at Paris.  
December 12—Treaty of Peace signed by commissioners.

## Opening Guns.

The opening engagements of the war need not be dwelt upon. They were merely a little target practice for our men. The first great action took place on May 1, when at home the American people were much taken up with the disturbing circumstances connected with moving day as with the events of the war. On this glorious day of May Admiral Dewey was making history by entering the harbor of Manila in the teeth of Spanish guns and calmly hammering out of holes the last remnants of the Spanish fleet and red eagles of Spain. Shall we ever forget how we waited for the news when we knew that Dewey had started on his voyage of vengeance; how we fretted at the lack of tidings; the false rumors and surmising that preceded the receipt of the glorious news that told of a victory that had never been equaled for quickness and completeness?

An event that caused a great deal of sadness in America was the death of Ensign Bagley and four of his men during the attack on the Spanish fleet in the Spanish harbor batteries. This occurred on May 11, and was the first fatal encounter of the war so far as the American forces were concerned.

## Crucial of the Oregon.

Another episode that attracted universal attention at this time was the memorable trip of the Oregon around the Horn. It was known that Admiral Cervera's ill-fated fleet had come across the waters, and our battleship, it was feared, would fall a victim to the greatly superior force. One is inclined to wish now that the thing we then feared had come to pass. The extraordinary sight might have been seen of an American battleship putting to flight or sinking an entire Spanish fleet. The suspense was ended by Admiral Cervera entering the harbor of Santiago on May 19.

The bombardment of San Juan de Porto Rico and Santiago wasted much powder and shot, but did little good and need not be dwelt upon. The next event that stands out gloriously in the chronicle of the war is the sinking of the Merrimack in Santiago harbor by Hobson. This brave deed was done on June 3, and although it did not accomplish the designed end of corking Cervera up in the Santiago bottle, it evoked more enthusiastic applause than perhaps any single act of daring in the entire war.

## Siege of Santiago.

The military epoch of the war begins with the landing on July 22 of Major General Shafter and his army of invasion. The following day the army was on its victorious way to Santiago. July 1 found our troops in possession of the Spanish works, and the bloody fight for San Juan followed. July 3 will ever be a memorable day in the history of this war. Cervera thought to turn our Fourth of July celebration of 1898 into a day of sorrow, but it proved to be a sorrowful day for Cervera instead. Instead of three hours to destroy the entire Spanish fleet and to destroy its sole surviving hope of success.

Our troops were in Santiago on July 17, having made a record for quick campaigning. General Miles then led an expedition in a little pleasurable excursion into Porto Rico, where the fate of the American soldiers had been so well advertised that, with the disappointment of the veteran general and his splendid little army, there was no fighting to be done.

The end came when Manila fell on August 13. Our loss in the army and navy, was 1,668 men killed and wounded.

## Local War Events.

Local dates with a war coloring are:  
April 16—General Coppinger and staff and troops at Fort Crook ordered to Mobile.  
April 27—State troops assembled at Lincoln; departure of Omaha Guards and Thurston Rifles.  
May 16—First Nebraska departs for the Philippines.  
May 19—Second Nebraska starts for Chickamauga.  
July 13—Third Nebraska mustered in at Fort Omaha.  
July 15—Third Nebraska given a farewell reception at the exposition.  
July 18—Third Nebraska starts for Jacksonville, Fla.  
August 22—Second Nebraska ordered from Chickamauga to Fort Omaha.  
September 2—Second Nebraska arrives at Fort Crook.  
September 20—Twenty-second infantry arrives at Fort Crook.  
October 12—National Peace Jubilee at Transatlantic Exposition, attended by President McKinley.

## Record of Disasters at Sea.

Disasters on land and sea wrought by angry elements or by accident form a melancholy chapter of the year's history. On sea wrecks were numerous, causing great loss of life. The first disaster of moment occurred January 31, when the British packet Channel Queen was wrecked in a storm off the Guernsey coast and nineteen lives lost. On February 7 the liner St. Louis rescued 127 passengers and a crew of fifty-five from the steamer Veendam, which had struck a submerged rock. On the 16th the French liner steamer Flishe was wrecked on the rockbound coast of Tenerife of the Canary Islands, and so fierce was the raging storm that thirty-eight of the crew and forty of the passengers were lost. On February 21 a severe hurricane at New Caledonia destroyed a French gunboat, and on the 22d of the same month the bark Almira, of Glasgow, was wrecked. On the following day forty-eight men of the Newfoundland sailing steamer Greenland perished in the ice floes while searching for seals in Alaska.

While steaming through a dense fog sixty miles off San Juan, Puerto Rico, on July 1, the French line steamer La Bourgoigne, from New York to Havre, collided with the British ship Cromartyshire. La Bourgoigne was making about eighteen or twenty miles an hour, while the British ship was making five with sails set. The shock was terrific, and in ten minutes the superior liner, with the greater portion of her crew and passengers, settled and sank. The Cromartyshire, while almost in a sinking condition herself, at once proceeded to rescue as many of the unfortunate as possible, but only succeeded in rescuing 165 of the 725 persons on board, the balance, 560, perishing as the ship plunged downward to her ocean grave. Nearly all of the cable passengers perished, the majority of the survivors being steerage passengers and sailors.

In Asiatic waters on June 28 a Chinese vessel was wrecked at Port Arthur and 120 of her crew drowned, and at the same time the Chinese junk and fishing craft suffered severely.

The summer months passed without further serious loss at sea. On September 11 a hurricane in the British West Indies destroyed a vast amount of shipping. Many lives were lost, but the number is unknown. On the 27th of the same month a severe storm wrecked the Leopard off the coast of Labrador and thirty persons perished. On October 14 the Atlantic Transport company's steamer, Mohican, formerly the Cleopatra, was wrecked off the coast of Newfoundland, leaving London for New York on the 13th with fifty passengers and a crew of 150, went ashore off the Lizard between Manacles and the lowlands and 116 of the 161 persons on board were lost, as it was next to impossible to rescue and the heavy sea running. On October 26 sixty Japanese were drowned as a result of a collision between two steamers.

A storm swept the Atlantic coast on November 1, and as a result the newly-arrived Maria was wrecked off the coast of New York. The ship was abandoned, the crew believing her to be in a sinking condition. The vessel did not sink, however, but stranded on Cat Island, where it rapidly went to pieces.

On November 15 the British steamship Londonian sailed from Boston for London with a large general cargo and 650 head of cattle on deck. On November 23 in a violent gale the ship shifted the greater part of her cargo and almost capsized. For two days the men were in danger of drowning, and then the Vedmore, a well known Omaha physician and a prominent official of a number of fraternal and benevolent societies. Dr. Rodgers died March 10 of brain disease and was buried at Forest Lawn by the Masonic order. He was a thirty-second degree Mason, sovereign physician of the Woodmen of the World, a Knight of Fythias and a member of various other organizations.

John A. MacMurphy, a pioneer Nebraskaan and journalist, was also among those who passed away in the year. He died at his residence in Omaha March 16, aged 50 years, and was buried at his former home at Plattsmouth. He had founded a number of newspapers in eastern Nebraska and was the original proprietor of the first live stock journal published in Omaha.

Two other physicians who were prominent in professional and social circles are also numbered among the dead of 1898. Dr. P. M. Chadwick died June 11 of heart disease, aged 46 years, and was buried at his old home at St. Joseph, Mo. Dr. C. D. Sprague died April 17 of Bright's disease and was interred at Prospect Hill.

Emma F. McClintock, one of the oldest and best known teachers in the Omaha schools, died in February and her remains were taken to Topeka, Kan.

In the same month Mrs. Catherine Kitchen, mother of J. B. Kitchen, passed away at the advanced age of 92 years. Her death was due to old age.

Mike Drummy, well known as one of the old-timers of the Omaha police force, died September 20 of nephritis and was interred at Holy Sepulcher cemetery.

The death of Charles F. Beindorf, which occurred October 3, removed one of the best known young business men of the city. Mr. Beindorf was the architect of the city hall and other prominent buildings and an influential factor in local politics. During the summer he was the proprietor of the German Village at the exposition and he was taken sick at that resort with gastric hemorrhage and died within a few hours.

Among the pioneers of Omaha who died last year Colonel Champion S. Chase was the best known. He was born in 1805 and was the first attorney general of the state. He served seven years as mayor of Omaha and held many complimentary positions in connection with various secret orders. He was appointed collector of the port at Omaha by President McKim and died shortly after he assumed the duties of that office. He was 75 years of age and his infirmities induced a fatal result from a fall which occurred some time before his death.

Charles Offutt, who was considered one of the ablest lawyers at the Douglas county bar, died November 3, after an illness which had been progressing for a year. He was buried at Forest Lawn.

Among the later deaths of the year was that of E. R. Dufrene, a pioneer of Omaha, who had for many years been one of its leading bankers. He died December 9 of a combination of diseases, and his remains are now interred in his former home in Detroit.

The death of Dennis W. Lane December 7 removed a figure which had always been prominent in local political circles. Dennis Lane was an old-timer who nearly every one knew. He was only 46 years of age when acute dropsy carried him into a grave in St. Mary's cemetery.

M. G. Edwards also died in December. He was one of the old-time printers of Omaha and had been connected for thirty years with one or another of the local papers.

Just before the end of the year Thomas J. Ormsby, one of the best known police officers in Omaha, died of pneumonia. Ormsby was connected with the police force as patrolman, detective and sergeant most of the time during the last twelve years. He was dropped in the recent reorganization and was out of employment during the last months of his life. He was a member of the local lodge of Elks, which took charge of his burial.

GLASGOW, Dec. 31.—The lord mayor of Glasgow has charged three commissioners, Messrs. Crawford, Simons and Mason, to visit the United States and to lay before President McKinley his proposals for the celebration of the Glasgow exhibition, to be held in 1901, in order to insure adequate American representation. The commissioners will sail for New York on January 1, on board the American line steamer St. Louis.

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There is already a so-called compulsory education law in this state, but it has never fulfilled the purpose for which it was intended. As originally introduced this measure contemplated attendance in the public schools alone and this feature induced a vigorous opposition from the Lutheran and Catholic influences, which contended that while the principle was all right they ought to be allowed the privilege of sending their children to their own schools if they desired.

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Some effort has been made to carry out its provisions in Lincoln, where recalcitrant parents were confronted with the threat that the children would be sent to the reform school unless they obeyed, but aside from this the law has been almost an absolute dead letter.

What the New Law Contemplates. The new law is expected to meet the objections that have been made against previous similar measures and effectually enforce the education of all children of school age. While the full effect of the bill has not been completed its general features are decided on and Mr. Myers expects to have it ready to take with him when he goes to Lincoln at the beginning of the new year. To a large extent it will follow the outlines of the law now in force in Ohio, but it contains details which will be modified to include such regulations as have operated with success in other states.

Briefly stated, the bill will provide that all children in metropolitan cities between the ages of seven and sixteen years shall attend school twenty weeks in each school year. Of these at least ten must be consecutive, beginning at some designated time, probably the date of the opening of the fall term of school. In districts where six months of school is held each child must attend four months, and in those which have only three months' school an attendance of only ten weeks is required. It is also provided that the same regulations shall apply to all children between the ages of 14 and 16 years who cannot read and write.

The objection that killed the previous attempt at this sort of legislation is met by making the bill allow the parents to send their children either to public, private or parochial schools the only restriction being that it must be a school in which the English language is taught.

It is proposed that instead of sending these children to the reform school, the Board of Education of a metropolitan city shall be empowered to establish a truancy school, where this class of pupils shall be taught. It is believed that this provision judiciously carried out can be made to save many boys and girls from the reform school and to bring them back to the fold of civilization.

Another, and a somewhat novel feature of the proposed law, refers to children who are incorrigible, vicious or immoral. It is proposed that instead of sending these children to the reform school, the Board of Education of a metropolitan city shall be empowered to establish a truancy school, where this class of pupils shall be taught. It is believed that this provision judiciously carried out can be made to save many boys and girls from the reform school and to bring them back to the fold of civilization.

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Other sections provide that in cases in which it appears on investigation that a child is unable to attend school because it is absolutely required to work at home or for other reasons, the parent or guardian is entitled to its services the matter shall be brought to the attention of the authorities who have charge of the poor and that every effort shall be made to afford sufficient relief to enable the child to attend school at least during the period which is made compulsory. A persistent violation of the law after one conviction has occurred is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for from ten to thirty days. The principals and teachers of all schools, public, private and parochial, are required to report at stated periods to the secretary of the Board of Education the name, age and residence of each pupil in attendance, together with such other facts as may aid in the enforcement of the law. The fact that a pupil is not registered as an attendant at any school will be accepted as an admission that the child is not a pupil and the parent is left no loophole through which to evade the law.

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Some effort has been made to carry out its provisions in Lincoln, where recalcitrant parents were confronted with the threat that the children would be sent to the reform school unless they obeyed, but aside from this the law has been almost an absolute dead letter.

What the New Law Contemplates. The new law is expected to meet the objections that have been made against previous similar measures and effectually enforce the education of all children of school age. While the full effect of the bill has not been completed its general features are decided on and Mr. Myers expects to have it ready to take with him when he goes to Lincoln at the beginning of the new year. To a large extent it will follow the outlines of the law now in force in Ohio, but it contains details which will be modified to include such regulations as have operated with success in other states.

Briefly stated, the bill will provide that all children in metropolitan cities between the ages of seven and sixteen years shall attend school twenty weeks in each school year. Of these at least ten must be consecutive, beginning at some designated time, probably the date of the opening of the fall term of school. In districts where six months of school is held each child must attend four months, and in those which have only three months' school an attendance of only ten weeks is required. It is also provided that the same regulations shall apply to all children between the ages of 14 and 16 years who cannot read and write.

The objection that killed the previous attempt at this sort of legislation is met by making the bill allow the parents to send their children either to public, private or parochial schools the only restriction being that it must be a school in which the English language is taught.

It is proposed that instead of sending these children to the reform school, the Board of Education of a metropolitan city shall be empowered to establish a truancy school, where this class of pupils shall be taught. It is believed that this provision judiciously carried out can be made to save many boys and girls from the reform school and to bring them back to the fold of civilization.

Another, and a somewhat novel feature of the proposed law, refers to children who are incorrigible, vicious or immoral. It is proposed that instead of sending these children to the reform school, the Board of Education of a metropolitan city shall be empowered to establish a truancy school, where this class of pupils shall be taught. It is believed that this provision judiciously carried out can be made to save many boys and girls from the reform school and to bring them back to the fold of civilization.

It is provided that truant officers shall be appointed in each school district to enforce the provisions of the law. In city districts the Board of Education is authorized to appoint two truant officers, one for each ward, and in village and township districts a constable may be authorized to serve in that capacity. In every case his compensation is to be fixed by the board. The truant officer is vested with police powers and with authority to enter workshops, factories and all influential places for the purpose of investigation. It is also his duty to institute proceedings against all parents or guardians who refuse to comply with the law. When a case is discovered in which a child who is susceptible to the operation of the bill is kept away from school the truant officer is empowered to issue a warrant or summons five days' notice in which to comply with the law. At the expiration of that period and in case of continued refusal it is his duty to file a complaint in any court of competent jurisdiction and upon conviction the penalty is a fine of not less than \$5 nor more than \$10, or imprisonment in the county jail for not less than five days, at the discretion of the court.

Other sections provide that in cases in which it appears on investigation that a child is unable to attend school because it is absolutely required to work at home or for other reasons, the parent or guardian is entitled to its services the matter shall be brought to the attention of the authorities who have charge of the poor and that every effort shall be made to afford sufficient relief to enable the child to attend school at least during the period which is made compulsory. A persistent violation of the law after one conviction has occurred is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for from ten to thirty days. The principals and teachers of all schools, public, private and parochial, are required